

352 are in use. These are made from three long strips of cloth sewn together side by side and at the ends. They are hung from the rafters and reach to the floor, the lower edges being tucked in under the sleeping mat.

342 The Tanala houses are comfortable and well adapted to the climate, the only disadvantage being that they are rather smoky.
356 The fire is kept going constantly, and in time the rafters and inside of the thatch become thoroughly blackened. For some reason, perhaps the general humidity, this smoke deposit is as glossy as black lacquer and gives a really decorative effect. Most of the houses are kept scrupulously clean. The floor mats are changed frequently, and the whole house swept at least once a day. Brooms made from palm splints and dust pans of matting are employed (Fig. 18, c, d).

342 There seem to be no special ceremonies attendant on house building or on first entering the new house, although the work is usually begun on an auspicious day. One informant mentioned a charm for house building, but I could not learn its composition or how it was used.

The Zafimaniry dwellings are also rectangular and are oriented in the same way as those of the rest of the tribe, but they are greatly superior in workmanship and solidity (Fig 18, g). They seem to be identical with the houses used by the Betaileo at the beginning of the historic period, and the Zafimaniry no doubt brought the type with them when they fled from the plateau.

The houses are rather small, the largest rarely being more than 15 feet long, and are rather wide in proportion to their length, some being almost square. They are usually built on terraces or on stone-faced earth platforms 18 inches to 2 feet 6 inches high. If on a terrace, a ditch 18 inches wide and of the same depth is dug round the
[361] house about 2 feet out from the walls, for drainage. The disposition of the houses in villages is very irregular and hardly two will be at the same level.

335 All the main timbers are made of hard wood and are carefully
342 squared and dressed. The three main posts are oblong in section, 3 to 4 inches thick and 8 to 10 inches wide at the base, tapering to about 6 inches wide at the top. They are firmly planted in the ground at either end and in the center of the house, their broad faces being at right angles to its long axis. The center post is usually slightly larger than the other two. Their tops are deeply notched to receive the ridgepole, which is also of hard wood, round, and about 4 inches

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in diameter. The height of the ridgepole varies, but is usually 12 to 15 feet. 342
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The walls are supported by four corner posts about 5 inches square and 5 to 6 feet high, which are also planted in the earth. These are connected by heavy stringers at the top and bottom. The stringers are 4 to 6 inches wide and 3 to 4 inches thick, and are placed with their broad faces vertical. They are cut into tenons at the ends and mortised into the corner posts. The walls are made from alternate thick and thin strips of wood. The former are of the same thickness as the stringers and 3 to 4 inches wide. They are mortised into the stringers at the top and bottom and grooved along the sides to receive the edges of the alternate thin strips. These are only $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick, with an exposed face of the same width as the wide strips. They are set in between the wide strips with their ends resting in grooves in the stringers (Fig. 18, f).

All the posts, stringers, wall boards, etc., in a given house are of the same dimensions throughout and carefully finished. The work shows a regularity almost equal to that of good European carpentry. The joining is extraordinarily good. Each piece is fitted and adjusted before it is put in place and the joints are so close that neither air nor light is admitted. The tenons and mortises are so exact that no pins or lashings are required. The entire house can readily be knocked down and reassembled on a new site and apparently this was sometimes done when new villages were established.

The gable ends of the house, above the walls, are filled with mats of split and woven bamboo. These are double, with a layer of clay or cow dung between to make them air tight. In the southern gable, high up, there is usually a smoke hole, framed with wood and closed with a wooden shutter (Fig. 19, a). Rarely, the gable ends are thatched, a few strips of bamboo being fastened across over the thatch to keep it in place. 342

The roof is rather steeply pitched. The rafters are made from small bamboos or peeled saplings, reinforced with transverse pieces of bamboo at intervals. The roof is sometimes thatched with leaves of the Traveller's Palm or grass, but is more commonly composed of several layers of bamboos. These are split, flattened, and bent over the ridgepole, their ends extending down to the eaves. The eaves are very narrow, extending only 3 or 4 inches beyond the house walls.

Planks are often fastened against the roof at either end with the broad face out. This serves to confine the thatch and also to protect it from the wind. In the Betaileo houses, these planks cross at the